

LIVING HERITAGE SYMPOSIUM

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SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
RESERVATION.COM

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ARTWORK BY STEVE TILLOTSON

Sensitive Treatment of Cultural Properties

Cultural significance is often not tied only to physical characteristics. Traditional design guidelines aren't necessarily sufficient and these cases can be difficult utilizing traditional tools. San Antonio has developed a proven method for landmarking culturally significant properties but the treatment of these properties after designation is not always clear. This discussion will focus on treatment recommendations when the significance isn't architectural. Recommendations from this session may include special use districts, new forms of designations, interpretation, and community engagement techniques.

Session Presenters:

Tim Frye, Julianne Polanco, Sharon Veale

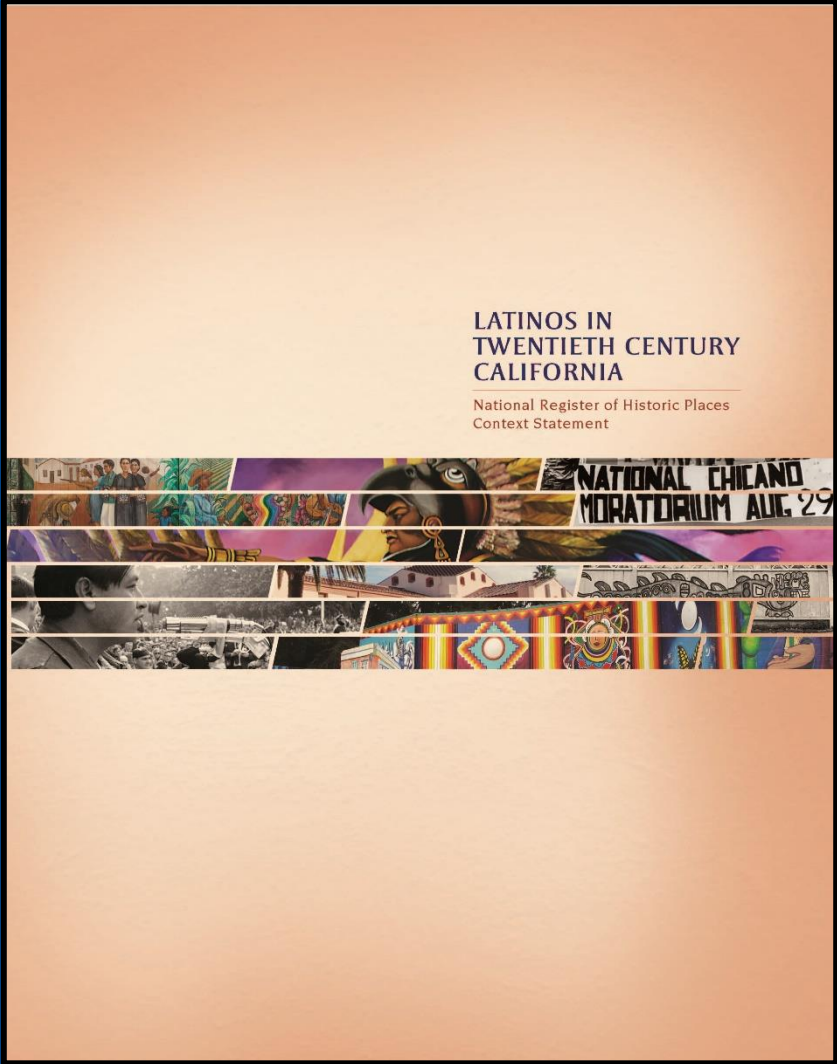


Simpler National Register Nominations: The MPD Approach

California State Office of Historic
Preservation



Latinos in Twentieth Century California



Latinos in Twentieth Century California



Cypress Street Schoolhouse



Lydia D. Killefer School



Forsythe Memorial School for Girls



Forsythe Memorial School for Girls

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

Forsythe Memorial School for Girls
Name of Property

Los Angeles, California
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Forsythe Memorial School for Girls (also known as the Presbyterian School for Mexican Girls) is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage. It meets the registration requirements for schools outlined in the *Latinos in Twentieth Century California* Multiple Property Submission, and is significant at the local level in the context of Religion and Spirituality. Constructed in 1914 and operated until 1934, the Forsythe Memorial School is a rare, surviving representation of Americanization attempts made by Protestant denominations to homogenize Mexican American culture in Los Angeles. Protestant churches, including Presbyterians, were the first to attempt to Americanize Mexicans through services like boarding houses and religious schools, in the hopes that "curing them of their evils" would give them a greater appreciation of America.⁸

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Forsythe Memorial School for Girls was founded in 1884 and run by the Women's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church. The purpose of the organization was to provide schools for the church's missions in the southwestern United States. Schools for boys and girls were also constructed in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. The subject building was constructed in 1914 especially for the school and housed grades one through eight.⁹ The architect for the building was H.M. Patterson who frequently worked with the Presbyterian Church in the Los Angeles area.¹⁰ He was also responsible for the design of Presbyterian churches in North Hollywood (1923) and Anaheim (1928).

The Mexican girls in attendance were primarily from the Southern California area. Described at the time as an "Americanization Plant" by the Home Missions Council,¹¹ the girls came from different socioeconomic and religious backgrounds.¹² Some girls had a Catholic upbringing while others already had a Protestant background; while some came from wealthier households, many were orphans and their only home was the Forsythe School, which also provided

⁸ Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1988), 179.

⁹ Jay S. Stowell, *A Study of Mexicans and Spanish Americans in the United States* (New York: Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions, 1920), 25.

¹⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, various dates.

¹¹ The Home Missions Council, established in 1914, was composed of representatives from each Presbyterian Synod where home mission work was carried out; these representatives met for three days each year to discuss issues and policies in their respective Synods. The Council then presented their findings to the larger General Assembly for review during their respective annual meeting. (*Annual Report of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, 1918, 38).

¹² Rose Scott, "An Americanization Plant: Forsythe Memorial School, Los Angeles California," in *Home Mission Monthly* Vol. 34 No. 7 (May 1920): 161.

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dormitories.¹³ The dormitories were on the second floor, while classrooms were housed on the first.¹⁴ The curriculum at Forsythe Memorial School for Girls had a heavy focus on domestic duties such as sewing and cooking, as well as patriotism and religion, including church services each Sunday.¹⁵ On average, there were around 90 students at any given time, and many of the girls attended on scholarship that covered the approximately \$50.00 yearly expense.¹⁶ The Forsythe Memorial School operated until 1934, after which the property was occupied by the Hebron Community Center, another Presbyterian organization.

Although the property is not nominated for its association with other ethnic groups, it is worth noting that this building was used following World War II as temporary living quarters for Japanese Americans. The facility was established by Reverend Sohei Kowta, a Japanese Presbyterian pastor, and provided accommodations for Japanese citizens seeking a new start in Southern California after having been forcibly removed and incarcerated in relocation camps.¹⁷ Reverend Kowta is a significant figure in Japanese American history in Los Angeles.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1920. Los Angeles, Volume 13, 1314.

¹⁵ Ibid.; Stowell, 25.

¹⁶ Stowell, 25-26.

¹⁷ "Hostel Opened for Japanese," *Los Angeles Times*, February 28, 1945, accessed May 6, 2014 via ProQuest.



National Farm Workers Association Headquarters



DeWitt General Hospital



Historic Contexts

- Making a Nation
- Making a Life
- Making a Living
- Making a Democracy



Property Types

- Criterion A—Events
- Criterion B—People
- Criterion C—Art & Architecture



Making a Nation



From early in the twentieth century, the Mission District of San Francisco has been home to an active Latino community of homes, cultural centers, and Latino-run businesses. *(Photo courtesy SFHeritage)*



Making a Nation



Published first in Mexico, and then in Los Angeles from 1910-1918, *Regeneración* was considered one of the most important Spanish-language labor and radical newspapers in the U.S. (Photo courtesy Creative commons/wikimedia)



Making a Life

Our Lady of Lourdes, the oldest Catholic Church in East Los Angeles, originally served Basque settlers. By the 1920s, the congregation was predominantly Mexican American. *(Photo courtesy Michael J. Locke, photographer, Los Angeles)*



The National Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sacramento, served as the terminus for the 1966 March to Sacramento, a protest march from Delano to Sacramento, organized by César Chávez and farms workers. The march was cast as a pilgrimage and used religious symbolism. *(Photo courtesy wikimapia.org)*



Making a Life



The Grand Olympic Auditorium, Los Angeles, was one of the premier sites for boxing competitions in southern California. Boxing was one of the most popular sports among Latinos throughout the twentieth century. (*Creative commons/en.wikipedia*)



Making a Life



Fresno's Teatro Azteca, built in 1948, was one of a number of theaters in California towns and cities that provided Spanish-language films and live entertainment for local Latino populations. (Photo courtesy Karana Hattersley-Drayton, City of Fresno)



Making a Living



Urban workers, like farm laborers, actively organized in the 1930s. Mexican women dressmakers initiated formation of a Los Angeles branch of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union. *(Photo accessed from laeastside.com; original source unknown)*



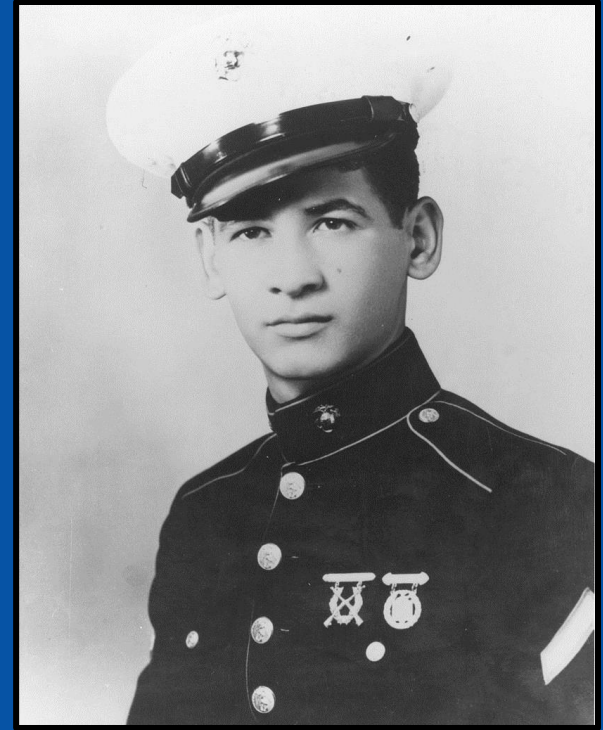
Making a Living



24th Street–Calle 24—in San Francisco's Mission District, has been the center of Latino commerce, art, and community since the postwar era.
(Photo courtesy SFHeritage)

Making a Living

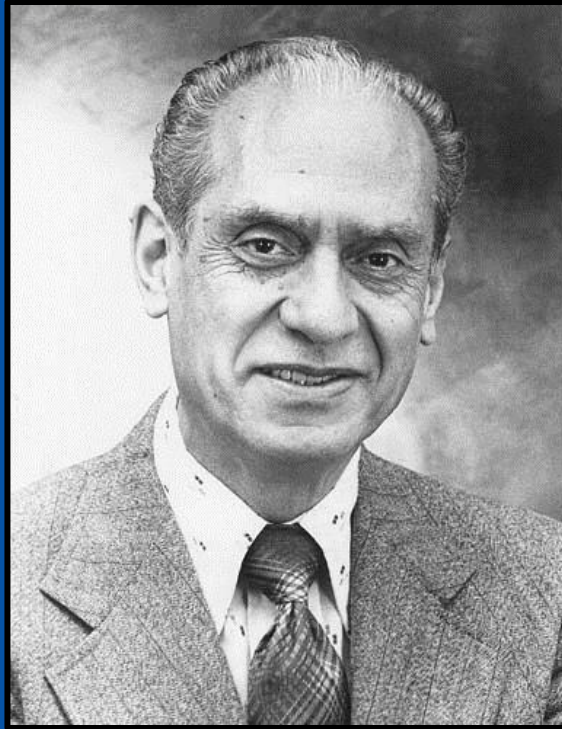
Ysmael Villegas, of the Casa Blanca neighborhood in Riverside, was one of two California Latinos to receive the Medal of Honor for their bravery in World War II. Villegas died in action, protecting his squad from enemy fire. A memorial statue of Villegas stands in Riverside's Main Street Plaza.
(Photo courtesy City of Riverside)



Eugene A. Obregon served with the 1st Marine Provisional Brigade in Korea. He died shielding a fellow wounded soldier from enemy fire, and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. American Legion Post No. 804 in East Los Angeles is named in his honor.
(Photo courtesy Creative Commons/en.Wikipedia)



Making a Democracy



Edward Roybal became a prominent voice for Latino rights in California and the nation. In 1947, Roybal co-founded the Community Service Organization, a leading Latino civil rights organization in the state. Two years later he was elected to the Los Angeles City Council. In 1962, Roybal became the first California Latino in the twentieth century, to be elected to the U.S. Congress. His daughter, Lucille Roybal Allard, later followed in his footsteps becoming the first Mexican American woman to serve in the U.S. Congress. (Photo courtesy Library of Congress, Office of the Historian)



Registration Requirements

Mexican Schools

- Designated for Mexicans, or actively associated with desegregation efforts
- Integrity to convey use & character from period of significance



Registration Requirements

- Not static
- Can be amended as needed
- Expand definitions to recognize more resources



Single Subject California MPDFs

- *Carnegie Libraries*
- *Highway Bridges*
- *Light Stations*
- *Twentieth Century Folk Art Environments*
- *U.S. Highway 66*
- *U.S. Post Offices 1900-1941*



Geographic Scope: National



Geographic Scope: Multiple Counties



Geographic Scope: Local



Integrity

- Location
- Design
- Setting
- Materials
- Workmanship
- Feeling
- Association



National Register Eligibility

Significance + Integrity = Eligibility

for the National Register

of Historic Places



National Park Service Bulletins

*National Register Bulletin 15,
How to Apply the National
Register Criteria for Evaluation*

*National Register Bulletin 16A,
How to Complete the National
Register Registration Form*



Documenting Properties

- Bulletin 16A, Section IV.
Documenting Properties Within
Multiple Property Submissions
- Section 7 Narrative Description
- Section 8 Statement of Significance



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